The Christian Quarterly

A THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

VOL. 2 Summer - - 1957 NO. 1

CONTENTS

The Christ and His Church in Shadow and Substance
by Owen L. Crouch Page 2

The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery by Robert O. Fife Page 7

The Return to the Bible in Higher Ebucation
by James DeForest Murch Page 17

The Historical Character & Homiletical Significance of John Wyclif by Charles R. Gresham Page 25

THE CHRISTIAN QUARTERLY

A Theological Journal representing the viewpoint of those holding the Restoration Ideal and looking forward to the unity of God's people through the proper application of this ideal; the ultimate goal being the Evangelization of the World.

Editorial Council

Enos Dowling, Lester Ford, Dean E. Walker, Burton Thurston, Seth Wilson, James Van Buren

CHARLES GRESHAM, Managing Editor

Contributing Staff

Frank J. Albert
Francis Arant
Russell Boatman
Owen L. Crouch
Don De Welt
Robert T. Drake
Howard Hayes
James Earl Ladd II
W. J. Richardson
Lawrence Bixler
Orvel Crowder
Ralph Dornette
Harold Ford
A. N. Hinrichsen
Robert G. Martin
Donald Nash
T. K. Smith
Mildred Welshimer
R. O. Fife
Robert Black
James B. Carr
Joseph Dampier
Harold Hockley
James D. Murch
C. H. Phillips
W. L. Thompson
Byron Lambert

Editorial Policy

Contributors enjoy reasonable liberty in the reverent exposition of New Testament Christianity and the Restoration ideal. The Editors are not to be held responsible for every view that may be expressed.

Address all correspondence to the Managing Editor,

Box 9632, Oklahoma City 18, Oklahoma

THE CHRISTIAN QUARTERLY is published four times annually. Subscription price, $3.00 per year in the U.S. and possessions and Mexico; Canada, postage 20 cents per year additional; other foreign countries, 40 cents per year additional. 3 years for $8.00 in U.S.; $9.00 elsewhere.

Editorials

FROM THE EDITOR

Rejoice with us! We are beginning the Second Volume of the Christian Quarterly. Although the first four numbers came from the press rather sporadically, we believe that we are now established enough to produce each issue as planned. However, we would like to increase our subscription list so that the Quarterly might carry itself financially. To do this we need 500 more subscriptions. We believe the Quarterly is a distinct and unique contribution to Restoration thought. If you believe as we, will you seek to promote it and urge others to subscribe?

HEARTENING REPORTS

From time to time we hear compliments on the Quarterly's high standards and relevance. From denominational sources inquiries have come. These reports are heartening, and they encourage us to keep the Quarterly firmly grounded in New Testament truth, yet in harmony with high scholastic standards. We want our appeal to be to those who know not the "glory" of our plea as well as to those who have taken a New Testament position. We solicit articles and essays that will conform to high standards and will speak with relevancy to the World today.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please note the change of address, editorially. The managing editor has become associated with Midwest Christian College in Oklahoma City. All communications, subscriptions, and essays should be forwarded to Box 9632, Oklahoma City 18, Oklahoma.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Owen L. Crouch is the outstanding Professor of New Testament at Milligan College in Tennessee, and a frequent contributor to our national journals of articles in the field of New Testament.

Robert O. Fife is Professor of Philosophy and Psychology at Milligan College, Tennessee. His contribution is a paper which was read before an association of Pennsylvania ministers.

James DeForest Murch is editor of United Evangelical Action, author of a number of articles and books in the field of Christian education, and a leader in the National Association of Evangelicals. His recent book, Cooperation Without Compromise is a definitive history of the N.A.E.

Charles Gresham is managing editor of the Christian Quarterly and Professor of Christian Education and Greek at Midwest Christian College, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

IN FUTURE ISSUES

The series of messages delivered at the North American Christian Convention in 1955 will be the core of our next issue. Ross Dampier, Milton Johnstone, Fred Thompson, Enos Dowling and James Van Buren will be contributors. In the coming year we are planning to devote one issue to the work of the ministry with articles on Counseling, Speech, Evangelism, etc. Other special issues are being planned for your edification and knowledge.

THE CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH IN SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE

by Owen L. Crouch

In the person of Jesus Christ and his divine fellowship, the church, all lines of ancient prophecy converge. "...in the fulness of the times, the Christ came, gathering up into Himself and uniting in His own Person all those lines of prophecy which had seemed so strangely inconsistent and irreconcilable, filling them with a new meaning, vivifying them with a new energy. Here was the answer to all men's hopes."[1] Certainly it is true that in Christ Jesus all inspiration and revelation centers. "The testimony of (to) Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev. 19:10) Whether in the Old Testament or the New, prophecy testifies to him who is the expression of the invisible God, the alpha and omega, the sum of all things.

In the Old Testament the true king of Israel was Jehovah. The kings of Judah reigned over his people merely as representatives of Jehovah. But the prophets of the Old Testament repeatedly pointed forward to the ideal King who would be the perfect and genuine representative of the nation to Jehovah -- and of Jehovah to the nation.

Jeremiah had the unhappy duty of prophecying when the kingdom was crumbling under the weight of its sin. Israel was falling to ruins and the kingdom was about to pass under the yoke of the heathen power of Babylon. But in the face of this dark despair he spoke with divine optomism of that coming day when God again would visit his people and raise up a ruler from among Zion's own people.

"Behold, I will turn again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have compassion on his dwelling places;.....their prince shall be of themselves, and their ruler shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is he that hath had boldness to approach me? saith Jehovah. And ye shall be my people, and I shall be your God."

1. Kirkpatrick, A.F., The Doctrine of the Prophets, p. 521.

So it was that when the nation was tottering to its fall the prophet predicted in his sorrow the advent of this native ruler, this king from among the people who would have priestly rights of access to the presence of God.

After the kingdom finally fell and passed away the prophet Zechariah placed a crown upon the son of the high priest and in symbolic significance predicted,

"Behold, the man whose name is the Branch (shoot): and he shall grow up out of his place; and he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." (Zech. 6:12b-13)

Thus the hopes of the restored community of Israel were directed towards the figure of a royal priest who should rule over God's people as the perfect representative of Jehovah. In the coming ruler are combined the functions of priest and king.

The Old Testament prophets add the notion of the coming of Jehovah himself to judge the world and to reign among his people.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

And what Christian is stranger to the familiar figure, unique to Jewish thought, of the suffering servant of the Lord who perfectly offers the obedience in which Israel had failed and through his suffering in life and death makes atonement for the sin of the many?

"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5)

In the person of Christ all these prophetic lines of revelation meet. They do not meet in a way ever before imagined or thought of by human reason, but nevertheless, in Him they meet in their ultimate reality. In the person of Jesus Christ God himself descends

to visit his people. He is Immanuel - "God with us." He who is truly God fulfilled as man the work of the perfect suffering servant passing through humiliation offering himself as perfect sacrifice for the sins of many. As royal priest and sacrificial victim he ever lives and makes eternal intercession.

Reading the Old Testament men would miss this picture of him who was to come - in fact they did miss it. Even those of his own disciples, the closest to him at first failed to understand the necessity of the suffering servant...a dying king, a spiritual saviour. When he first spoke of his approaching death Peter, one of his chosen, rebuked him, "Be it far from thee Lord, this shall never be unto thee." (Matt. 16:22). And when they came from the mount of transfiguration he spoke to them of his death at the hands of murderous men it is said, "they understood not the saying, and were afraid to ask him." (Mk. 9:32).

When Jesus came, Those whose business was to search the scriptures utterly mistook him. To them he was a bitter disappointment. Those who preconceived Messiah from a partial study of the Old Testament got a distorted portrait and they refused to acknowledge him at all. Yet in reality Jesus Christ is the sum of all scripture, the ultimate substance of every Old Testament shadow; the fullest realization of all prediction; the explicit maturing of all that was implicit in the sacred writings. He said, "I came not to dr stroy, but to fulfill." (Matt. 5:17) And as the shadow gains its outline from the substance so the Old Testament gains its deepest significance and its kernal of ultimate reality in the person of Jesus Christ. Prophecy does not become fully intelligible until reflected in the light of his person, his teaching, his offices, his life and work, and his kingdom. Reading the Old Testament prophets from a literal point of view and with personal or material presuppositions any one would reject the spiritual suffering Jesus, but it is important to point out that we know what the prophets meant by what they said when we see HOW God fulfilled them. We interpret what God says by what God does. In the light of the actual Jesus who came we may fully affirm that the Old Testament teachings about the coming Immanuel Priest-King are completely realized in him.

The fellowship of Christ, which we know in the New Testament as the church, is the realization on the plane of historical reality of God's rule over men of all nations finds its fruition in the church described in the New Testament.

The concept of the kingdom of God with universal sway dominates the pre-Christian revelation. In the prophecy of Isaiah in which he tells of the coming of the Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, the prophet adds,

"Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever." (Isaiah 9:7)

Daniel is definite and detailed in recording the dream of the progress of the kingdoms of history. In the prophet's interpretation of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar he portrays the rise of the four great empires of antiquity...The head of gold, Babylon: the breast and arms of silver, Persia: belly and thighs of brass, the Greeks: legs of iron, Rome: the feet of mixed iron and clay, the strength and weakness of Rome among the nations and peoples. Then came the stone out of the mountain cut without human hands and it broke in pieces these kingdoms of men.

"And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Dan. 2:44)

So with one voice the prophets of the Old Testament speak of the coming universal everlasting kingdom of God among men. And in complete harmony with these ancient prophecies are the messages of the New Testament. At the time of the annunciation to the virgin Mary the angel said,

"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1:32)

Words could hardly be more clear or explicit in identifying the kingdom of God portrayed by Daniel with that set up by Jesus and his apostles in New Testament times.

When John the Baptist came in the wilderness the burden of his message was, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 3:2) Furthermore, the kingdom was the burden of Jesus' message and was the formative concept of his ministry. When he came into Galilee after the death of John he came "preaching the gospel of God and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel." (Mk. 1:14, 15) When he sent out the 12 on a preaching mission they were to preach of the coming kingdom. "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 10:7) When his disciples were disheartened he encouraged them with the thought that they were recipients of his kingdom. "Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32). Before Pontius Pilate he acknowledged that he was in the world as king. To Pilate's question "Art thou a king?" He responded, "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, That I should bear witness unto the truth." In connection with this passage note that the kingship of Jesus is associated with truth. It is not power politics nor international diplomacy that are the chief concern of His kingdom. Truth and error live in the hearts of men. Truth deals with the realities of life, its origin, destiny, its sin and redemption. This is the realm in which Jesus rules and reigns.

The kingdom of the Jews, that is, the Jewish people as a corporate nation has been once and for all rejected as being the people of God. Certainly not as individuals, but as a nation the Jews are rejected. The predictions of universal dominion and rule are not to be fulfilled by the Jews as a corporate unit. In the parable of Jesus about the wicked husbandmen who rejected and killed the servants and son he asked his captious critics, "When therefore the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do unto those husbandmen?" And their answer was to the point, "He will miserably destroy those miserable men, and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen, who shall render him the fruits in their season." Jesus saith unto them, "Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, The same was made the head of the corner; This was from the Lord, And it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Matt. 21:33-46) The kingdom of God was taken away from the Jew and it has been given to a nation, a new people of God in whose hearts the truth of God lives and over whom God reigns and rules through Jesus Christ, his Son. That new nation consists of people out of all nations who have been begotten again into the image of God through the Word of God.

Hear the voice of the apostle Peter writing to Christians, Many of whom were Jews, "ye also as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (I Peter 2:5) And yet again he says, in the spirit if not in the words of the Old Testament, "...ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people

for God's own possession...." (I Peter 2:9) How could it be more clearly stated that the fellowship founded by and in Christ Jesus is now the people of God fulfilling all the functions of faithful husbandmen who are rendering to the Lord of the vineyard the fruits in their season? The Church of Christ, redeemed men in the fellowship of Christ, this is the kingdom and the rule and reign of God promised to Abraham, shadowed in the law and predicted by the prophets of God.

At the early council of the Jerusalem church in which the Gospel which Paul preached was brought for examination and confirmation this same truth is revealed. Following addresses by Peter, Paul and Barnabas, James pointed out that God by means of the prophet Amos had predicted a time when He would choose his people not only from Jews but equally and without distinction from amongst the Gentiles.

"Symeon hath rehearsed how first God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written..." (Acts 15:14f)

The church in the New Testament days found in the prediction of Amos and the prophets those promises of the return of Israel and the rebuilding of the Davidic kingdom. This same church of New Testament days, under the spirit-guided apostles, saw in the work of Paul among the Gentiles and in Peter's receiving of Gentiles into the Church the fulfillment of those same Old Testament predictions. The kingdom of God is not to be conceived as of this world. It is not a kingdom of flesh and blood with the Jew in a superior place of leadership. Jesus Christ is Messiah and son of God, a king who reigns now over a kingdom of truth and he is the one who reigns over this kingdom, the ultimate fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. The visible manifestation of Christ's kingdom is that spiritual institutionsmade of men of all nations, the Church of Christ.

We know what God means by what God says and by what God does in the fulfillment of what he has said. The New Testament fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies about the kingdom are as deeply different in their actual fulfillment as were those about the person of Messiah. They missed HIM when he came; we are liable to miss his kingdom while being in the midst of it. Yet if the king was a spiritual king should not his kingdom be spiritual in every sense of the word? In Christ the Old Testament teachings about the coming Immanuel priest-king are fully realized. In Christ's fellowship, the Church, the Old Testament teachings about the coming kingdom are just as fully realized.

Certainly in the mind of Paul the church of the living God was the eternal agent through which all men without distinction should be saved to God through an obedient faith in Jesus Christ his Son. It is Paul who speaks of the Gentile and Jew who are "one new man", Christ having broken down "the middle wall of partition" so that all alike are "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph. 2) He speaks of Gentiles as being "fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise through the gospel..." (Eph. 3). Then the great apostle points out how HE has been given the trust of making this gospel known "to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose...". (Eph. 3:10-11) The church of Christ is the glorious agency through which God designed his redeeming love to be made known. It was the church, forever in the mind of God, predicted by his faithful prophets, established and builded by his apostles and entrusted in this twentieth century to this generation's hands.

"Know therefore that they that are of faith, the same are the sons of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith preached the gospel

beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed. So then they that are of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham." (Gal. 3:7-9)

And yet again the apostle voices the same idea in Romans,

"For not through the law was the promise to Abraham or to his seed that he should be heir of the world, but through the righteousness of faith....for this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace; to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (as it is written, A father of many nations have I made thee)..."

I, the Christian, am the true Jew. We, the church, men of all nations, are the real inheritors of the Old Testament promises and predictions. To Paul the promise of God "a father of many nations...." found its fulfillment in the Christian church. This new Church of Christ is the "chosen people" of God. This new chosen people of God is absolutely above all racial, national, sexual, legal, or any other artificial barrier or distinction, for "there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female." (Gal. 3:28) The church is no afterthought of God, a kind of parenthesis in history as a makeshift until he can gain sufficient control to establish his eternal kingdom. The church was conceived in God's mind from times eternal as the agency of the recreation of the human race, the new humanity in the image of God.

If what actually happened and came to pass in the founding of the church of the New Testament, if it was of supreme importance in the salvation of the Gentiles, so large a section of humanity, if it were not foreseen in any way by those who saw and spoke the mind of God; then we must conclude that something came that God did not anticipate. Events caught God off guard when the Jews rejected his kingdom and he had to substitute the church. God did not foresee the church! If, on the other hand, God did foreknow the church and then never gave even the slightest intimation of such a glorious institution, it follows that he has left a large lacuna in human history over which we moderns must needs fumble. This asks too much of faith. However, since prophecy was an inspired glimpse into the eternal presence of the divine mind it follows that prophecy foresaw the divine purpose for man unfolding itself in time, and that prophetic foresight necessarily in due course was actually realized in fact. The church of Jesus Christ is the realization of that eternal institution in the mind of God for the redemption of humanity.

Passing through Chicago one day I picked up a brief religious tract. It purported to have come from "a prominent Jewish teacher." Here is a portion of what he said, "I am not a converted Jew. I have accepted all of God's messengers, Prophets, Priests and last, but not least, His Son Jesus Christ, the long expected Messiah of the Jewish people. Through this Saviour not only have I found salvation but through my people salvation is offered to all mankind. My obedience to God's plan of salvation for everyone who will believe, has given me a great joy which I cannot express in words". This Jew was not "converted" to Christianity. He found in Christianity the final full realization of Judaism. The true Jew will be a Christian. The Christian is the true Jew: the church is the real kingdom.

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE SPRINGFIELD PRESBYTERY

by Robert O. Fife

The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery is a unique document in the history of the Church, for it expresses the voluntary dissolution of a party for the sake of the unity of the Church. There had been parties before, and the world had seen the dissolution of parties for numerous reasons; but that a party should voluntarily dissolve itself, and that for the sake of Christian unity, was indeed something new.

This was no abdication because of dying faith, but self abnegation because of growing faith. The longing for unity did not arise because faith no longer made a difference, but because faith persistently demanded a difference. Faith called for an end to sectarianism, and for the realization on earth of the unity of the Church in heaven.

For this reason a study of The Last Will would seem to be very much in order, not as the worship of a dead letter, but as the heeding of a living message. It is in this spirit that we turn to a survey of the

I. BACKGROUND OF THE LAST WILL

The great religious fact of the 18th century is the awakening which began under the preaching of Edwards and the Tennents, supported by Whitfield and a host of others, and which swept along the Atlantic seaboard from north to south. It entered Carolina in the persons of such men as David Caldwell and James McGready. Caldwell had established a log college near Guilford Court House, and it was to this school that young Barton W. Stone came in 1790. Stone was a descendent of a prominent family in Maryland, but the death of his father while yet a young man had left the family in rather difficult straits.

In his early student days in Caldwell's school, young Barton often made light of religion. This was a common pastime, and seemed particulatly enjoyable to budding young lawyers such as himself. However the appearance in the neighborhood of James McGready, the powerful revivalist, caused a profound change in Stone. It did not create a new faith in him, but it did knock the smugness out of him.

Stone had pondered the meaning of McGready's message a year when he traveled to Hampden-Sidney College and heard the president, J.B. Smith, speak on "The Sacrifice of God, a Broken and Contrite Heart." This powerfully attracted the young man, but the sermon of McGready which followed entitled "Tekel, Thou Art Weighed in the Balance and Found Wanting," left him in utter despair. The strong Calvinism seemed to offer him no hope. Fortunately it was only a few weeks later that he heard William Hodge preach on "God Is Love," for this long-neglected heart of the Gospel won Barton Stone to Christ.

In keeping with his new spirit of devotion, Stone gave up the study of law for that of the Gospel ministry, and after further years of preparation was ordained by the Transylvania Presbytery in 1798. In view of his future career, it is worthy of notice that Stone did not accept the Westminister Confession without qualification, but "so far as consistent with the Word of God." This fact is adequately attested by witnesses who were present. It may be pondered why he was ordained since he had signified this question on creed. The answer is to be found in the presence of old Henry Pattillo, the examiner of candidates, who though of rather generous tendencies towards Arminians (Methodists) himself, was above reproach in Presbyterian circles. At least the intellectual honesty of the young candidate is here of no little significance, and Pattillo considered Stone's sermon on "The Trinity", and his qualified acceptance of the creed sufficient.

Like many other young men of his own and later generations, Stone traveled west into Tennessee, and over the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky. There he was assigned to serve the churches at Cane Ridge and Concord, located in the heart of a very rich and promising region. The new minister entered into his labors with characteristic Zeal and sincerity, rapidly endearing himself to his people.

The quiet, regular activity of such a ministry was not, however, to continue long, for Stone heard of the advent of a religious awakening in Kentucky the early part of 1801. Greatly interested, he journeyed some hundred miles where he found revival men of Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian backgrounds all laboring together. It was at his own solicitation that the movement spread to Cane Ridge, where the greatest religious gathering ever seen on American soil took place.

Much has been written concerning the peculiar phenomena which characterized the meeting at Cane Ridge. Stone himself describes these in his account of the occasion, but he does not place the emphasis upon them that others have.

The thing that so tremendously impressed Stone was the power of unity. It seemed no accident that when men were united in preaching the Gospel without sectarian limitations, people by the hundreds were converted. These were furthermore admitted to the churches without hindrance of creeds. The great motivation was evangelism, and unity was a necessary prelude to any significant victories for Christ. Thus it is to be seen that Stone learned through the Great Revival what the authros of the *Declaration and Address* were to conclude in 1809 -- that the evangelization of the world awaited the unity of the Church.

Not all of Stone's contemporaries, however, shared his supreme passion for souls. It was difficult for them to appreciate such achievements since they were not within party lines. Therefore the denominational authorities, especially those of the Presbyterians, attempted to rebuild the fences which had been torn down by the revival men. The Baptist and Methodist authorities were not necessarily more interested in unity than the Presbyterians, but they simply found less in the revival methods which was objectionable. On the other hand, the Presbyterians saw in the revival a great threat to the doctrine of election, and for this reason opposed it the more strongly.

Among those opposed to the newly discovered "Gospel without benefit of Westminister" were the venerable orthodox leader David Rice, the less venerable but equally "orthodox" James Kemper, John Poage Campbell, and James Blythe. To Blythe belongs the rather dubious credit for the statement, "I am not ashamed to be called a sectarian."

Originally associated with Stone were Robert Marshall, John Thompson, Richard McNemar, and John Dunlavy. Later supporters were Matthew Huston, Malcolm Worley, and David Purviance. Robert Marshall was a native of Ireland, a veteran of the Revolution, and a student at Liberty Hall, Lexington, Virginia. He was endowed with great native eloquence and power. McNemar and Dunlavy were brothers-in-law, both from Pennsylvania. John Thompson was a Carolinian, and seemed to be something of a sattelite to Marshall. David Purviance, sixth witness to the *Last Will*, was a powerful personality. A member of the Constitutional Convention of Kentucky, he was for years a leading minister among the Christian Churches in Kentucky and

Ohio.

The attack of the orthodox was first directed against Richard McNemar, a rather volatile person, for his insistent preaching of "free will." James Kemper used Elder Tichener of the Turtle Creek Church near Lebanon, Ohio, to initiate the charges. These were presented in the meeting of Presbytery at Cincinnati, October 6-9, 1802. There an examination of McNemar took place, and was duly recorded in the minutes. However, he was returned by Presbytery to Turtle Creek.

The following year the zealous Kemper presented a petition against both McNemar and John Thompson at the spring meeting of Washington Presbytery. This six day gathering in Springfiled failed to support Kemper's action, for the "revival men" were in a majority. Thus one may see here an inchoate "Springfield Presbytery."

Meanwhile, the Synod of Kentucky had been formed in 1802. Its second meeting was held September 6-13, 1803 in the First Presbyterian Meeting House in Lexington. Present were 23 preachers and 18 elders. Samuel Shannon was moderator, and Samuel Finley clerk. At this meeting of Synod the lines were clearly drawn, and it became evident to the "revival men" that their cause would suffer a decisive blow if the machinery of that body were completely harnessed by their opponents. When this fear became evident reality, the five made a formal withdrawal from the jurisdiction of Synod, but not from the Presbyterian Church.

Of this difficult day of trial before Synod, the irenic Stone says:

> That body appeared generally very hostile to our doctrine, and there was much spirited altercation among them. The other four of us well knew what would be our fate, by the decision on McNemar's case; for it was plainly hinted to us, that we would not be forgotten by the Synod. We waited anxiously for the issue, till we plainly saw it would be adverse to him, and consequently to us all.
>
> In a short recess of Synod, we five withdrew to a private garden, where, after prayer for direction, and a free conversation, with a perfect unanimity we drew up a protest against the proceeding of Synod in McNemar's case, and a declaration of our independence, and of our withdrawal from their jurisdiction, but not from their communion.[1]

Both the Synod and the General Assembly attempted to reclaim the dissenters, David Rice urging that "every departure from Calvinism was an advance to atheism."[2] The "revival men" did indicate their willingness to return to Synod if they might be accepted as a distinct Presbytery. In this way their freedom to evangelize might be assured. However, the Synod was unwilling to accept this proposal.

The stage was thus set for the formation of the "Springfield Presbytery." This was a rather natural thing for men trained in Presbyterian principles. The group then published *The Apology of the Springfield Presbytery*, a document of great significance, and dedicated itself to a sober study of Church government. It was the latter research into the New Testament which led them to see they were "off the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets."

Meanwhile, "under the name of the Springfield Presbytery," the group continued preaching and constituting churches. Such was their success that by 1804 there were 15 "regular societies," seven in Ohio, and eight in Kentucky.

But all was not well with the Springfield Presbytery. It is true that harmony prevailed, and the work was growing steadily. The sincerity of the leaders was itself a source of strength. Stone

had set the example when he voluntarily relieved his churches of their obligation to support him, and began to support himself by labor on his farm. It constituted no small hardship to continue preaching under such circumstances, but this he did, night after night, and often more than once a day.

The problem which the Springfield Presbytery faced was that involved in its own existence. The study of the New Testament to which the dissenters had devoted themselves revealed no such body in the apostolic age. They were "off the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets." Thus the conviction gradually grew that the Springfield Presbytery was itself a sect---a contradiction of all that they stood for. In Stones words, "We had not worn our name more than one year, before we saw it savored of a party spirit." [3]

There remained but one thing to do, and on June 28, 1804, the courageous act was taken wherein the Springfield Resbytery willed its own dissolution and death, As to who was the author of the LAST Will there is some question. Stone has generally been thought to be the writer, but a document recently discovered in the New York Public Library, written by Marshall and Thompson in 1811, and entitled, *A Brief Historical Account of Sundry Things in the Doctrines and States of the Christian, or as it is Commonly Called, the Newlight Church,*[4] indicates that McNemar was the author. Moreover, Marshall and Thompson claim to have been opposed to the *Last Will*, calling it "the obnoxious instrument." However, it is to be remembered that this newly-found Document was written shortly before their return to Presbyterianism, and it would be quite natural to profess innocence of such an unpresbyterian action. It is further to be noted that that Marshall's name appears first among the witnesses to the *Last Will*. This is strange conduct for one who professes to have participated unwillingly in an action.

On the other hand, it is quite evident from subsequent events, that only Stone and Purviance appreciated the significance of *The Last Will*. All the original five had signed a letter to the Synod which is quoted by Marshall in the *Apology* as saying, "A party is not our aim, and this we hope to evince to you, and to the world, at your next session."[5] But to disclaim sectarian intentions is one thing, and to follow a non-sectarian course is another. Perhaps Marshall and Thompson did have difficulty in seeing what might be the alternative to a presbytery. Nor are they the last who seem to have quailed at *the thought of seeing the churches free to exist directly under Christ.*

McNemar and Dunlavy seem to have been characterized by a far different tendency. They were not only willing to dissolve the sectarian institution of the Springfield Presbytery, but were later willing to dissolve the universal institutions of the worshiping congregation and marriage. This was made manifest by their acceptance of Shakerism.

It would be an historical anachronism, however, to attribute later motives or thoughts to the earlier period in which the *Last Will* appeared. What differences there may have been among the five were not sufficiently significant to mar the unity of the group until some time after the *Last Will* had been published. Actually it seems to be a lesson of history that it is much easier to be united in dissent from a prevailing viewpoint, than it is to be united in creation of a new point of view. A unity which is found in common negation of an error is much

less difficult to sustain than a unity in the discovery and affirmation of truth.

It is of no little significance, therefore, to note that the *Last Will* appears at the critical point where negation of a sectarian order must give way to the creation of a universal order.

The dissolution of the Presbytery was accompanied at this time by the assumption of the name "Christian." This second step toward the achievement of a universal position was taken at the suggestion of Rice Haggard, who had recently joined the group. This is itself a significant fact, and one well worth further study.

Thus the Springfield Presbytery was dissolved, and its *Last Will and Testament* published to the world.

II. AN ANALYSIS OF THE *LAST WILL*

The *Last Will* begins with the following composit of scripture:

> For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all, while the testator liveth. Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, yet once more, signifies the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

The document then continues with the normal form to be expected in a will, except for significant modifications,

> THE PRESBYTERY OF SPRINGFIELD, sitting at Caneridge in the County of Bourbon, being through a gracious Providence in more than ordinary bodily health, growing in strength and size daily; and in perfect soundness and composure of mind; but knowing that it is appointed for all delegated bodies once to die; and considering that the life of every such body is very uncertain, do make, and ordain this our last Will and Testament, in manner and form following, viz:

That a serious religious statement should be couched in such a clever form is itself a master stroke. The *Last Will* had an immediate impact not enjoyed by the *Declaration and Address* because the form carried such a popular appeal. However, it is far from being a facetious document.

The fundamental statement of the *Last Will* is given in the form of an imprimus: "We will, that this body die, be dissolved, and sink into union with the Body of Christ at large; for there is but one Body and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling."

Here is a statement unique in historical annals. That a sect should will its own dissolution in order that the unity of the Church might be further realized was formerly unheard of. There had been numerous sects which had desired the dissolution of others, but whence had one pronounced such a sentence upon itself? This is particularly significant in the light of Reformation history, where a succession of movements lost their sense of direction and mission, and became almost totally concerned with their own self-perpetuation.

To these men, not even a body of their own making was too precious to dissolve for the sake of the body of Christ. It took no little vision to acknowledge that their continued existence constituted a barrier to the realization of the unity God had created. Their faith in the reality of that divine unity is expressed in the phrase, "There *is* one Body and one Spirit. ." Moreover, there could be few other acts which would more certainly seal the sincerity of their dissent than such self-immolation.

The phrase "sink into union" is extremely significant, for it shows a con-

cept of unity far different from that commonly held. Is unity to be achieved by creation of a super-body to unite the sects? or is unity to be realized as sects become willing to die that the true Church might appear? This is a fundamental question, and one by no means out of date. The attitude of these men is clear. Called "schismatics" by their opponents, they sought to demonstrate the opposite in their own dissolution. In the *Apology* they had defined a schismatic as "one who aims to divide the church into sects and parties; not only by separating from its communion, and drawing away disciples after him, but also, by loving the pre-eminence in the church, receiving not the brethren, forbidding them that would, and casting them out of the church, as did Diotrephes."[6]

The dissolution of the Springfield Presbetery would surely seem to exonerate its members of the charge of schism. They had never intended to be a cause of division, and in the *Apology* had said, "Merely forming a separate association is not schism; provided that the association be not intended to dissolve the union and communion of the Church." In keeping with this principle it is to be noted that they had never withdrawn from the communion of the Presbyterian Church; they had only repudiated the jurisdiction of the Synod of Kentucky.

But here the fundamental contradiction was found. How could one remain in communion with a synodical body, while rejecting the authority of synod? Or, how could a group repudiate one authoritative body in the name of the Gospel, and then constitute themselves another authoritative body in the name of the same Gospel? Love of truth had motivated the "revival men" in their initial withdrawal from the Synod. In the words of the *Apology*, "We found we must forsake them, or what we believed to be the truth: the former were dear to us, but the latter was dearer."[7] Now that the same love of truth motivated their self-dissolution. This is surely an attitude unique in the annals of history.

A corollary of the desire to witness the dissolution of sectarian bodies is the desire to cease being sectarian individuals. This the following two items express. The first reads:

> We will that our name of distinction, with its Reverend title, be forgotten, that there be but one Lord over God's heritage and his name One.

These men had reason to be very conscious of the abuse of ordination and of the powers thereby conferred. The pretensions of clergy to distinction was implied in the use of the name "reverend", and therefore the title was to be abandoned. Any tendency to exalt an individual over God's heritage was deemed a usurpation of divine right.

The second item says:

> We will, that our power of making laws for the government of the Church, and executing them by delegated authority forever cease; that the people may have free course to the Bible, and adopt the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

The unique character of this statement becomes apparent when one but remembers the persistent and sometimes vicious means whereby the Papacy rose to power. The attitude of these men is further to be appreciated when it is contrasted with that of many Reformation leaders, who broke with the authority of Rome only to assume similar prerogatives for themselves.

The witnesses do not even desire the continuance of delegated authority. Years later in the *Christian Messenger* Stone wrote that once the principle of representation at conventions was established, the groundwork for another papacy was laid.

They are furthermore very conscious of how time can shroud an illigitimate body with sanctity. In the *Apology* this danger was noted with rare insight:

> Time has a wonderful power in legalizing bodies. A few years have legalized the self-created bodies of Luther, Calvin, and all the different sects of Christians, since the Reformation. [8]

It is of no little interest that these men do not want their own Presbytery to survive simply by weight of tradition. If its continued existence is not justified by the Word of God, or hinders the accomplishment of the unity for which Christ prayed, they do not will the sanctity of the years to surround it.

What is the alternative to synodical or episcopal authority? The answer is found in the latter portion of the item: "that the people may have free course to the Bible, and adopt the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." There are three elements to the alternative here offered. The first is the worshiping congregation---"the people." Here is a fundamental conviction that there can never be any body greater than the local congregation, for when any group of Christians meet, the most they can be is a worshiping congregation. Indeed, they may be less---a conference, convention, synod, presbytery, or council---but they can never be more than a worshiping fellowship---a Church.[9]

The second factor in this alternative is the Bible. It is not the creed which is authoritative, but the Scriptures. Moreover, the people should have free access to the Scriptures. This is the only logical conclusion to be drawn from the doctrine of the priesthood of believers. Implicit in this concept is a fundamental confidence in the "concensus fidelium" ---the confidence that the faithful Church will properly understand the Bible.

The third factor is the adoption by the people of the "law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus." This would seem simply to be the fruit of Christian worship, the bond of Christian fellowship, and the occasion of Christian mission. The Holy Spirit must be allowed free movement within the Church. Every barrier hindering His ministry must be removed. This is a fundamental reason for "Restoration."

Thus one may see in this item what William Robinson has expressed as the essentials to knowledge of the "mind of Christ" in our day. Where the Church is to know the will of the Lord, there must be the whole Church, in the act of worship, under the judgement of the Word of God.[10] Recognition of this principle would have saved many a congregation from tragedy.

The next three items deal with the Gospel ministry. The first expresses the desire that "candidates for the Gospel ministry henceforth study the Holy Scriptures with fervent prayer." and that they "obtain license from God to preach," aided by the "Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven." This may possibly be a reaction to the course of theological studies then required of preachers. Or it may be a reflection of such experiences as that of Stone, when one of the "orthodox" preachers sought to kill the revival by a long, dead sermon. Stone, though himself a sick man, broke into the message with a fervency which caused the "orthodox" to flee the building.[11] One may also see the reaction to abuse of the Gospel by diluting it with "philosophy, vain deceit, traditions of men, or the rudiments of the world."

Moreover, the Gospel ministry is not a way of livelihood to be assumed by an

individual, but a call to be answered. Nor does any institution authorize a man to preach. His call is from God, as was Aaron's (Ex. 4:14). The *Apology* makes this item more clear when it says:

> When the church, or their representatives, take a candidate on trial, it is not with a view to call and authorize him to preach, but to inquire into the validity of that call and authority which he professes to have received from God. If they approbate his profession, they express it by the act of licensure. The candidate is then to make full proof of his ministry, whether it be from heaven or from men; and when the church is satisfied, they manifest it by ordaining him. In all this the church confers no power, human or divine; but only the privilege of exercising the power and authority in that particular society, which they believe he has received from God. This privilege the church may recall; the candidate may forfeit, or voluntarily resign.
>
> But neither the refusal of the church, his own forfeiture, nor resignation of that particular privilege, can disannul the original call of God, nor the obligation of the candidate to obey. These principles are confirmed, both by the New Testament and church history. [12]

The following item indicates that while the Church does not itself "call" a man to the Gospel ministry, it does have the duty to "try her candidates for the ministry as to their soundness in the faith, acquaintance with experimental religion, gravity and aptness to teach." Moreover, a congregation is to admit "no other proof of their authority but Christ speaking in them." Neglect of this responsibility on the part of the Church encourages the development of other qualifications for the Gospel ministry than those which are conducive to the life and mission of the Church. Thus we often hear it asked of a candidate for a pulpit, "How old is he---over forty?" or "How many degrees does he have?" "Is he independent or cooperative?" or "Is he a good mixer?" How minor are these qualifications when compared with those the *Last Will* here proposes!

The right of the Church to judge the validity of its ministry is grounded in the fact that the Church knows the Gospel which created her and sustains her life. The mission of world-wide evangelization was given to the Church. Therefore it is said, "We will, that the church of Christ look up to the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest," But the Church is not only to pray for laborers, she is to "resume her primitive right of trying those who say they are apostles, and are not."

This respect for the authority of the worshiping congregation is very significant. Some years later Alexander Campbell and Joseph Badger, Editor of the *Christian Palladium*, carried on a rather lengthy debate on the question.[13] Mr. Badger was of the opinion that there were certain things, such as ordination, which a local congregation was not authorized to do. Mr. Campbell replied that a congregation has authority to take any step necessary to the fulfilment of its mission, and consistent with its nature. Inter-congregational activity is expedient, but any agency so created does not thereby come to possess the authority once vested in the congregation. Wherein lies the wisdom of this provision? It is found in the fact that agencies may come to perpetuate themselves by means other than the proclamation of the Gospel, but not so the Church. When the Gospel is silenced, the worshiping congregation dies. This fact was certainly recognized by the witnesses, for the Gospel they preached had created numerous congregations, and significantly, opposition to their message did not rise from the churches so much as from the agencies which had assumed the authority over the churches.

This would seem to be the chief reason

for the insistence of the witnesses in the fifth item that the Church "never henceforth delegate her right of government to any man or set of men whatever." This earnest plea for the worshiping congregation to retain her primitive right of existing as a free body under her Lord is reminiscent of the Twelve Articles of the Swabian Peasants.

It must not be thought, however, that the worshiping congregation is a law unto itself, for it must always be subject to the judgement of the Scriptures. Thus the sixth item says,

> We will, that the people henceforth take the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven; and as many as are offended with other books, which stand in competition with it, may cast them into the fire if they choose; for it is better to enter into life having one book, than having many to be cast into hell.

Here the Bible is viewed as the only sure guide to heaven. Any other books which assume the place of the Bible, or "compete" with it are to be cast away. This is of course aimed at the Confession.

The weakness of the Confession is pointed out by Stone in his "Remarks on the Confession of Faith." He says,

> When any law, or rule of conduct is authoritatively explained the explanation is the law, and we are necessarily bound to understand the original according to the explanation. [14]

Moreover, creeds fail to achieve their end, which is unity, "for people soon begin to dispute as much about the meaning of their creeds, as about the Scriptures." [15] To these men there was no alternative to the Bible.

The irenic intent of the *Last Will* is further expressed in the next item:

> We will, that preachers and people, cultivate a spirit of mutual forbearance; pray more, and dispute less; and while they behold the signs of the times, look up, and confidently expect that redemption draweth nigh.

It would be quite erroneous for one to assume that the authors of the *Last Will* believed they had a corner on the truth, that they had "arrived", or that the religious world would find unity by the simple expedient of submitting to them. to them prayer was more important than disputation. Furthermore, forbearance was to be mutual---a recognition that where one may forbear the faults of others, they very likely forbear much in him.

Moreover, the impending presence of the Lord of the Church should provide the incentive necessary to fulfill this virtue.

The remaining items constitute pointed exhortations. The "weak brethren," who may have wished to make the Presbytery of Springfield their king, are admonished to "betake themselves to the Rock of Ages." Furthermore, the Synod of Kentucky is challenged to suspend all others who are suspected of heresy, "in order that the oppressed may go free." The public is invited to examine the conduct of the witnesses, and a warning is issued to all who might condemn them without sufficient evidence.

Finally, all the "sister bodies" of the expiring Springfield Presbytery are exhorted to "read their Bibles carefully, that they may see their fate there determined, and prepare for death before it is too late."

Thus concludes the *Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery.* As a document it stands among those few which have significantly influenced the history of the Church in America. Though its form attracted immediate and widespread attention, its substance continues to demand careful reflection.

It may be observed that the witnesses to the *Last Will* typify the history of the movement which the document helped to

create. On the one hand, the defection of McNemar and Dunlavy to the sectarianism of the Shakers may be considered a symbol of the separatism and fragmentation which has characterized one phase of the movement.

On the other hand, the return of Marshall and Thompson to Presbyterianism typifies that portion which has gradually resumed the institutional forms of thought and practice, whereby agencies have been considered bonds of union.

Only Stone and Purviance seemed to follow a course consistent with the principles of the *Last Will*, where the unity of faith was steadfastly proclaimed, and conviction was accompanied by charity.

It remains to be seen whether the subsequent actions of its witnesses constitute the final judgement upon the *Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery.*

1 Rogers, John, The biography of Elder Barton Warren Stone, Cincinnati: J.A. and U.P. James, 1847, p 47.

2 Ibid 47

3 Ibid, 50

4 Cincinnati: J. Carpenter and Co., 1811

5 Rogers, op cit, 176

6 Ibid, 186

7 Ibid, 173

8 Ibid, 173

9 This is closely related to Karl Barth's definition of the Church as an "event" of congregation.

10 See his "Biblical Doctrine of the Church", p 135

11 Rogers, op. cit., 173

12 Ibid, 181, 182

13 See the "Christian Palladium".

14 Rogers, op. cit., p 232

15 Ibid, 233, 233

THE RETURN TO THE BIBLE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

by James DeForest Murch

History is repeating itself in the field of higher education among the churches of Christ in America. We are standing on the threshold of what promises to be a new and better day in the Restoration Movement.

The early years of the Nineteenth Century in America were marked by a decadent denominationalism and a vibrant deism and infidelity. The French Revolution had reached across the Atlantic and, in so far as its basic philosophy was concerned, was influencing the thinking of thousands in every walk of life. Voltaire, Rousseau and the Encyclopedists were being reflected in Tom Paine's *Age of Reason* and other popular works. The colleges and schools of higher learning were godless and the churches were dying of dry rot.

It was in such a setting that Alexander Campbell founded Bethany College and there began the Restoration Movement's distinctive contribution to Christian education. Campbell was committed to "the Bible and the Bible alone as a rule of faith and practice." This principle became basic to all his thinking and to all his action. It is small wonder, therefore, that when he made his splendid adventure in higher education, he put the Word of God at the center.

Richardson in his *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell* says: "In the College Mr. Campbell proposed a liberal course of studies, giving somewhat more prominence than usual to the physical sciences and contemplating the most liberal provisions for thorough instruction so as to prepare young men to enter upon the study of the learned professions. In this department, however, as in others, moral and religious training was to form a principal feature and the Bible was to be one of the regular textbooks so that no one could receive the honors of the institution without being acquainted with the Sacred Oracles which were to be taught regularly every day..."

"Mr. Campbell's plan," continues Richardson, "differed radically from all preceding measures in making the Bible the basis of all moral culture. The relations of the great principles taught in the Bible to human rights, and political and social freedom had for some time been partially recognized but no one had assigned to it its proper position in respect to the sciences, which had as yet found no better foundation than philosophy, the study of which was postponed to the latest period..."

If the Disciples, as Mr. Campbell called them, have made any distinct contribution to higher education in America, it is precisely at this point. Following the Bethany pattern, institutes and colleges began to grow up in the Midwest in a sort of hit or miss fashion. Many died from want of financial support or the passing of the personality around which they were built. But some took root and reached maturity, such as Hiram, Eureka, Butler and Drake. The older Transylvania later contributed a ministerial training school bearing the word Bible in its name (The College of the Bible). A Still later generation was responsible for the establishment of Bible Chairs in connection with State universities. Always it was the Bible which was conceived to be at the center of and indispensable to the process of higher education.

As long as this guiding principle was kept clear the Restoration Movement was

able to develop an educated leadership and constituency which remained true to the vision and the ideals expressed so adequately in Thomas Campbell's *Declaration and Address*. The movement grew with such rapidity that it became the religious marvel of the century. At the close of the 1800's there were over twenty institutions of recognized standing which could truthfully be called Christian colleges. They derived their support from the churches of Christ, they were staffed by our own educators, they were committed to "the Bible and the Bible alone as their rule of faith and practice", and they maintained standards which were consonant with the purposes for which they were founded.

With the opening of the Twentieth Century, history began to repeat itself in American education. Insidious influences, comparable to those rampant in the early days of the previous century, were being imported from continental Europe. Naturalism and secularism began to infiltrate public education. The mind of man was exalted over the will of God as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Modern science, committed to the evolutionary theory, took the place of philosophy in basic schematic education and began to dominzte the whole educational process. Religion itself began to supinely submit to current fads in thought.

In the secular field educators came to believe that the individual recapitulates the evolutionary history of the race and should be allowed to express his resident desires freely. They held that truth was only relative and that which was expedient. Its validity was dependent upon man's ability to assimilate, corroborate and verify. Education, in their view, became only an instrument by which the developing and changing person might continue in the quest of certainty. In the words of John Dewey, they held that "genuine values and tenable ends and ideals are to be found within the movement of experience" and not "from authority, human or super-natural, or from any transcendent source".

In the religious field educators were inclined to follow the leadership of their secular compeers. Moreover, from continental Europe came a growing movement led by Eichorn, DeWette, Welhausen and other outstanding theologians which began to undermine biblical theology in America. It received encouragement in England from Driver and George Adam Smith. It not only rejected the credibility, inspiration and authority of the Holy Scriptures but raised grave questions concerning the nature of Christ. Bible-centered education was abandoned for man-centered education. God's will was no longer the norm; man's mind became the measure of all things. The absolute truth of God's revelation to man was exchanged for relative truth. Human social activities became matters of primary concern. The goal of education was no longer to fit men to live in harmony with the will of God, but the attainment of a balanced, growing socialized personality.

The University of Chicago, launched under the auspices of the Northern Baptist Convention, and largely financed by the Rockefeller interests became the cultural center of modern "higher education" as it was to be related to the churches. Its graduates were eagerly sought for professorships in church related colleges. Theological schools of leading denominations gravitated to Chicago, including the Disciples Divinity School, with such men as Ames, Willett and Morrison numbered on its faculty.

Soon most Christian Church colleges had fallen in line with the trend with liberals moving into professorships, deanships and presidencies. Once in

the liberals moving into professorships, deanships and presidencies. Once in control of faculties and boards of trustees they proceeded to eliminate, in the name of "academic freedom", all personnel committed to the idea that the Bible must be normative in the process of Christian education.

It was not long until young men and women, brought up in God-fearing, Bible-loving homes and full of Christian zeal, began to graduate from these schools with their faith undermined and their confidence in the Bible shattered. Young men, supposedly trained for the Christian ministry in these institutions, began to reveal an utter lack of conviction for the basic doctrines of the Christian faith and for the Restoration plea.

The ministerial training schools soon became the battleground between the forces of liberalism and evangelicalism. The case of Transylvania and the College of the Bible stands as the cause celebre of the battle among the churches of Christ. For many years under the presidency of J.W. McGarvey the College of the Bible had been the epitome of orthodoxy in the life of the brotherhood. At McGarvey's death Hall L. Calhoun had become head of the College. The beloved and courageous Mark Collis, minister of Broadway Christian Church, Lexington, Kentucky, had become Chairman of the Board. Both of these men stood like the proverbial "rock of Gibraltar" for the great principles of the Restoration Movement and a sound biblical basis of education. Supposedly Christian men stooped to the lowest forms of personal diatribe and political chicanery to achieve their ends. Space forbids any attempt to tell the story even in outline. Suffice to say, the forces of biblical Christianity were overwhelmingly defeated. Liberalism took over and is still in control of the properties, endowments and operations which represent the toil, sweat and tears of generations of Bible-loving Christians.

Many attempts have been made to attribute the divisions in our older educational institutions to such unworthy motives as personal rivalries, selfish ambitions, publishing house competition and anti-intellectualism. Undoubtedly, human nature being what it is, the highest motives of the best men may not be unmixed by lesser considerations, but by and large what took place in the educational life of the brotherhood in the days from 1910 to 1940 was only a small sector of a nationwide educational conflict which affected every Christian communion in America. The record stands in history to confirm this statement.

After an ill-fated attempt to re-establish the remnants of the historic College of the Bible in the setting of Bethany College, it began to appear that the only hope for a restoration of the distinctive biblical program of higher education first envisioned by Alexander Campbell, was in a new beginning, building from the ground up.

The resources for such a courageous adventure were pitifully small, if judged by the material and educational standards of the new day. Indeed, the advent of Cincinnati Bible Institute and the McGarvey Bible College (later merger to form the Cincinnati Bible Seminary) must have been greeted by Disciples educators with much the same attitude as that displayed by Yale and Harvard when it was announced that Bethany College had

been established in the wilds of Western Virginia.

But there was a desparate and overpowering conviction in the hearts of evangelical educators and ministers that unless something were done immediately the Restoration Movement would be lost. They were uncertain as to what might be necessary to design and execute their program, but they had faith to believe that God would give them the answer to their problems as they arose. They took refuge in President James A. Garfield's definiton of a college. "Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a student on the other" and began "on a shoestring" to undertake the establishment of new schools.

They conceived of their problem as primarily religious, and after that, educational. There was a faith to be perpetuated---the one true, exclusively perfect and complete Plan of Salvation revealed in the New Testament---the restoration of the apostolic Church in doctrine, ordinances and life. As they proceeded they learned the deepest truth about education---that, like Faith, it is an attitude of man's soul and mind. God, in His own good time, they believed, would provide the essential material resources that He had for Bethany, Hiram and Drake in the days when they were loyal to the Restoration ideal.

These educational pioneers moved ahead in the wilderness of liberalism founding colleges in every section of the USA and even overseas in the mission fields. Today there are more than thirty of these schools training far more ministers, missionaries and full-time Christian workers than all the heavily endowed, standardized institutions of the Disciples of Christ. These new schools are yet in their infancy. The Lord willing, most of them will grow in stature and quality to form the greatest contribution that the Restoration Movement has made to higher education. This generation is too close to this phenominal development to fully appreciate its significance.

At this stage along the road to ultimate achievement it is imperative that our educational leaders become more objective in their thinking, begin to evaluate their accomplishments, improve the quality of the work being done, revise or eliminate unwise practices, and move toward a proper integration of the movement as a whole. We should like to suggest some of the major problems which need to be faced if God is to continue to bless the work.

1. *Adequate Equipment and Facilities.* Despite the fact that our Bible schools and colleges now own property worth some few millions of dollars, they are all without exception inadequately housed to care for their students. Classrooms are overcrowded and poorly equipped. Dormitory facilities are below average. Dollars invested per student in plant and equipment, in comparison with the liberal colleges of the Disciples and the institutions of our "non-instrument" brethren show a shocking disparity.

This ought not to be. Our churches and our families have money for everything else under the sun. Our people, as American citizens, are pouring multiplied millions in special taxes to build public school buildings in their various communities which are the marvel of the educational world. Is not instruction in righteousness and the preparation of a new generation of Restoration ministers and leaders of equal or greater importance? Nothing less than the best in buildings and equipment must be provided for these new schools.

New textbooks need to be produced for nearly every subject in the curriculum, outside the Bible itself. The older texts served their day and generation, but most of them are out of date, inadequately oriented to meet modern day needs. Unfortunately, in some courses it is necessary to use texts which have been prepared by liberal authors. Instructors seek to correct their errors in science, philosophy and theology while using major content as a guide to study. Our publishing houses cannot meet the crucial need unless they can have the cooperation of all the educators in (1) agreement on curriculum, (2) agreement on qualifications of authors, (3) provision for sabbatical leaves for the preparation of manuscripts, (4) agreement on standards of production and distribution, etc. Costs would be prohibitive unless there could be reasonable guarantees of orders over a period of years. To date there has been no serious discussion of this problem either by educators or publishers.

Libraries in the new schools are, for the most part, inadequate. All too many have been built out of contributions of "spare" volumes from ministerial libraries. The same standards of quality and comprehensiveness which obtain in the best college libraries should be met and exceeded by our evangelical schools. This cannot be done in a day, but too few institutions are making any serious attempt to even develop skeletal outlines for future adequacy.

2. *Conference and Cooperation.*

In the very nature of the development of our new schools and colleges there has been a vigorous and laudable spirit of self-sufficiency under God. They have had to fight their way against doctrinal arrogance and agency opposition.

Occasionally strong individualistic leaders have stamped their personal prejudices and peculiar interpretations of Scripture upon institutions to such an extent that they become reactionary, looking upon other schools as heretical, or, at least, lacking in those essential characteristics necessary to meet the onslaughts of modernism, evolutionism, denominationalism, ecclesiasticism and other evils which menace the true faith. The net result of this unfortunate trend has been to make it possible for our enemies to brand the independent Bible college movement as negative, obscurantist and defeatist.

We believe that by and large that day has passed and that we are entering upon a new era in which our sights have been lifted, our perspectives have been realigned, our thinking has been balanced and our common objectives are becoming clearer.

This is a time for cooperation in a common task. Our educational undertaking is of such mammoth proportions that no one institution will be able to realize it singly and alone. Indeed, it is doubtful whether all of them together will be able to accomplish the task before it is everlastingly too late. It is possible, however, that working together a constructive program can be built, techniques may be improved, and a new quality of performance may be attained and the whole field may be more adequately covered. It is possible cooperatively to create a new educational conscience in the brotherhood and to elicit whole-hearted cooperation in improving our schools and colleges and making them adequate in every way to meet the needs of the Restoration Movement in our day. The problem of inter-collegiate relationships can be faced in prayer, friendly exchange of criticism, and willingness to give and

take. In such a climate cooperative programs and projects may be undertaken to the glory of God and the good of the Church.

To this end an annual national educational conference might well be created, not on an institutional or official basis, but purely informal and voluntary in character. Such a gathering would exercise no authority of any kind, but could well be a channel of blessing to all. In thus getting together a new spirit of fellowship would most certainly develop, together with a rising sense of comradeship in a mighty advance against error and in the accomplishment of the holy goals of the Restoration Movement as announced to the world at the dawn of the Nineteenth Century.

3. *Standardization and Accreditation.* There was a time when these words were anathema to our new schools. They conjured up all the worst in the old accrediting associations which eliminated the Bible from the curriculum and stressed that type of rationalistic, scientific intellectualism which best suited the liberal concept of "academic Freedom". To meet the requirements of those associations could only result in emphasizing evolution in the biological sciences, behaviourism in psychology, humanism in religion, relativism in ethics and materialism in general. None of our educators wants to return to such slavery carried on in the name of freedom.

But many problems have arisen in the new schools which call for a reasonable standardization. For instance, the student who through force of circumstances beyond his control, finds it necessary to transfer from one school to another, under present conditions finds that wide divergencies in entrance requirements, curriculum, credits and values of degrees handicap him in completing his education. Serious study has been given such problems and solutions are being worked out.

In 1947 The Accrediting Association of Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges was organized to meet the need. It has a statement of criteria which ennables an institution to evaluate itself. If interested in proceeding further, questionnaires are filled out to accompany the self-evaluating charts and sent to the Association with a request for a visit from its Board of Examiners. Thus begins a helpful interchange of information and advice which usually results in a stimulation of academic and spiritual incentives in the institution and in the end in proper accreditation. All appropriate Federal agencies, the National Education Association, the American Council on Education, the New York State Department of Education and other educational bodies too numerous to mention have now given formal recognition to the AABIBC. A number of schools of the churches of Christ have already qualified for accreditation and others are in the process of qualifying.

4. *Graduate Schools.* The problem of adequate training for college and seminary teachers and higher education for advanced ministerial students is also becoming increasingly crucial. Provisions for advanced and specialized study beyond the bachelors degrees have been made in some of the larger schools but in no instance has the work approximated the quality and range of study available in such institutions as the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky. Invitations have been extended to our educational leaders to confer on this problem and several meetings have been held. This is an encouraging

development which should receive the friendly cooperation of all who seek the welfare of the Restoration cause as a whole.

It is important that the faculties of our educational institutions have a breadth of culture and a comprehensive intelligence which will fit them to render a quality of service second to none in the context of twentieth century life. They should have a solid grounding in the natural sciences, the humanities and the fine arts as a setting for a thoroughly adequate theological and philosophical grasp of the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. Bible-believing, Christ-honoring leaders must not be anti-intellectual. They must be aware of all the rational processes Christian and anti-Christian by which men seek the truth. On the other hand they must excel in faith and revelation, God-given conviction and an abiding sense of Christian Mission.

The development of a graduate school capable of producing such a leadership will involve, among other things, careful selection of a faculty, proper relations with standardized schools, the maintenance of high academic standards, proper doctrinal safeguards, adequate educational facilities, sufficient endowment or financial underwritings, a carefully selected representative board, a proper location and a wise administrative policy.

5. *Liberal Arts Colleges.* The educational emergency of the 1920s and 30s was the training of ministers and church leaders. The task appeared so urgent that a proper perspective of the whole educational task was lost. Now people are beginning to ask, What of a Bible-centered liberal arts education for the lay worker? Thousands of future elders, deacons, trustees, Bible-school superintendents and teachers, the men and women in the pews who are the leaders in the business and professional life of the of the community are being educated in colleges and universities committed to the same humanistic philosophy which destroyed our ministerial training institutions.

Some of us have been concerned about unfortunate conflicts and dividions in local churches served by graduates of the new Bible colleges. A considerable amount of this friction is due to the fact that the lay leadership of the churches have a mind-set which is inimical to a biblical program. These good people have no biblical background because they were trained in colleges which did not accept the authority of the Word of God as determinative in all of life.

The Bible school and Bible college, in their very nature, cannot qualify as institutions to train young people for the so-called secular professions---education, law, medicine, engineering, etc. There is still a crying need for the type of school Alexander Campbell had in mind when he founded Bethany College. The churches of Christ have need for several new thoroughly Christian colleges of liberal arts. These schools, while adhering to accepted academic standards, should employ only active Christians as faculty members and administrative officers, accept the teachings of the New Testament as basic to their educational philosophy and the chief element in their curriculum, give Christ the preeminence in their life and program, and maintain as their chief goal the extension of the Kingdom of God through the lives of dedicated men and women in the so-called secular pursuits of life.

We realize that the establishment of liberal arts colleges involves a far great-

er financial obligation than the founding of Bible schools, but whatever the cost this is an educational obligation which must be discharged. Should we fail in our responsibility at this point we cannot expect to grow and prosper as a people or to challenge the world with our plea. Sooner or later every religious communion of appreciable influence in America has realized the need for liberal arts colleges which are definitely church related, and has provided and maintained them regardless of the sacrifices entailed.

We can only mention the place of the Christian liberal arts college in the life of the nation. The very foundations of American Democracy are essentially Christian. One reason for the growing paganism and the consequent national declension in our day is the departure of collegiate education from basic biblical principles. Sound Christian colleges where these principles are enshrined will alone produce the kind of citizenry America must have if it is to survive and to be a guiding light to the nations of the earth.

If we have seemed to be in any way lacking in appreciation of the work that is now being done by our newer schools and colleges we hasten to pay tribute to the yeoman service being rendered by our educators under stresses and limitations not of their own making. The churches of Christ in America will never be able to repay the founders of our loyal Bible colleges for their contribution to the ongoing of the Restoration cause. Their vision and courage in a time of crisis "saved the brotherhood" in a very real sense. They have summoned us to return to a position which is old but ever new. There are times when the only way forward is to go back. We have rediscovered the old paths. We are again putting the Bible at the center in the educational process.

The Bible remains the greatest liberating power in the world. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" is the master text of Christian education. Modern liberal education has sought to claim an exclusive right to that text, but Christ added (you will remember) this significant observation when He made the statement originally: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed". It is the spiritual truth embodied in the Word of God and in the Son of God which strikes the shackles from men and emancipates them for service to God and mankind.

In the words of Dr. Frank E. Gaebelein in *Christian Education in a Democracy* (Oxford University Press): "While our call to education is a call back to the Bible and Christ, it is at the same time a summons to go forward with Him. In Him is the life more abundant, the highest goal in education. His greatest victories are yet to come. He is the Lord of the future as well as of the past. For He alone can declare, 'I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive forever more'."

THE HISTORICAL CHARACTER AND CONTEMPORARY SIGNIFICANCE OF JOHN WYCLIF'S REFORM PREACHING AND THE HISTORICAL CHARACTER AND HOMILETICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF JOHN WYCLIF

by Charles R. Gresham

John Wyclif appeared upon the religious scene in England at that time when the old systems and thought-patterns were breaking up. As yet, England had not recovered from the fearful depopulation caused by the Great Pestilence. The servile class, whose labor had become more and more valuable because of this depopulation, were becoming dangerous to their superiors. Agitation was being stirred up against serfdom and other evils of the feudal system. Nationalism was coming into prominence and there was a widespread opposition to papal usurpations. This feeling of nationalism and independence was, in the main, political; but it was to be used later in the great Wyclifite effort to combat the hierarchical church.[1]

The religious scene was no better than the political. The papacy was at low ebb, morally and spiritually. Its licentiousness had become so great that even the Parliament under Edward III had to speak out against the "sinful city of Avignon", where the Pope resided. Not only had the papacy become morally bankrupt it had also become "revenue-hungry". England smarting under these exactions was to give a ready ear to the reform-preaching of Wyclif when he spoke out against these evil practises.

The preaching of the Mendicants had also degenerated. No longer were they following the spiritual leadership and example of Francis of Assisi. Rather than preaching the Word of God, they mouthed illustrative stories (exempla) to gain a popular hearing and a good hand-out. The begging-Friars had become hypocritical using poverty merely as a cloak to gain sympathy and popularity. No longer were they true to the ideals of their order.

All of these influences[2] blended together to form fertile ground into which Wyclif, the preacher of the Reform, could sow his seed and reap a harvest. We could never understand Wyclif's influence and pertinence except as we understood this basic unrest, politically and spiritually, which we find in fourteenth-century England.

John Wyclif[3] was born at Ipreswel (evidently Hipswell) in Yorkshire. The date of his birth was somewhere near 1320. Very little is known concerning his early life except that his family was that ancient family which is celebrated by Sir Walter Scott in *Marmion*. His family and the Balliol family were neighbors and in due time Wyclif proceeded to Balliol College, Oxford, which had been founded by this illustrious family. He was a fellow and master here being elected master in 1360, though holding the office only for a short time.

The next few years are unimportant in his life and we find few traces of him, although we suppose that much of his time was spent as a teacher at Oxford, where he later gained wide influence and popularity as a lecturer and doctor of Theology. In 1372 he became a Doctor of Theology and soon thereafter was favored by the crown with the presentation of the rectory of Lutterworth, which he held until his death.

In 1374 he was appointed as one of the royal envoys to go to Bruges to confer with papal representatives on the long vexed question of "provisions". After his return from this conference he lived alternately at Oxford and Lutterworth and

during this period his fame as a popular preacher was rapidly established. It is from this period that dates the beginning and development of his trenchant criticisms of the corruption of the clergy and his censure of the papal system. This began as a political censure but soon developed into a doctrinal issue.

In 1377 the Archbishop of Canterbury summoned Wyclif to appear before the Bishop of London to answer charges laid against him. This Wyclif did in February of 1377 making his appearance accompanied by his protector and benefactor, John of Gaunt and certain colleagues from Oxford. Nothing was settled as a riot developed between Wyclif's protectors and the Bishop, ending the session.

Even in the face of such opposition Wyclif progressively became more radical in his views and soon lost the support of John of Gaunt and other powerful nobles of the realm. He attacked the usual views of the Church as to the nature of the Church, the sacrament of Eucharist, and the officiary. Beginning in 1378 he started an agressive propaganda campaign which carried his views to the streets. To carry this out two means were employed---the institution of his "poor priests" and the translation of the Vulgate into the English vernacular.

Following the Peasants' Revolt in 1831 Wyclif's popularity waned. Leagued against him were both state and church and some felt that Wyclif had had something to do with the Revolt, though this is extremely doubtful. However, the Archbishop of Canterbury called a court of ecclesiastics, determined to do something about stamping out this Wyclifite heresy. This court condemned Wyclif's works on 24 counts of heresy and error. However, they were not able to harm Wyclif as he still enjoyed a tremendous popularity but he was forced to retire from Oxford. Here, in retirement at Lutterworth, he continued his writing and translation and during this period he wrote two of his most important works---the *Trialogus* and the unfinished *Opus Evangelicum*.

In 1382 or 1383 Wyclif was seized with a paralytic stroke, in spite of which he continued his labors. In 1384 he was cited to appear before Pope Urban VI at Rome, but he never went. On the 28th day of December of the same year he suffered a final stroke and expired on New Year's eve, 1384. He was buried at Lutterworth; but by the decree of the Council of Constance meeting in 1415, his remains were ordered to be exhumed and burned, which order was carried out at the command of Pope Martin V by Bishop Fleming in 1428.

Strange as it may seem, Wyclif's influence did not last very long in his native country although the Lollard's[4] continued to stress his basic beliefs for some time. It was otherwise, however, in Bohemia where his works had been carried by the scholars who came to England with Richard II.'s queen, Anne of Bohemia. Soon John Huss, Wyclif's disciple in Bohemia, had raised Wyclif's doctrine to the dignity of a national religion. Through Huss, Wyclif in turn influenced Luther and the continental Reformers of the sixteenth century.

Before moving on to a study of Wyclif's views on preaching and an analysis of some of his own sermons, let us note briefly his theological viewpoint which, to a great extent, sets the stage for his homiletical theory and practise. To suppose that Wyclif was cut from the same cloth as the later Protestant Reformers is absurd. There is no indication at all that Wyclif taught justification by Faith,

as it was later emphasized in the sixteenth-century Reformation. However, Wyclif was a Reformer and his theological position was quite at variance with that of the Roman Church. In fact, some of his views were extremely revolutionary.

As we have pointed out in the short biography of Wyclif, his reform ideas came rather late in life and underwent a definite development. This development proceeded in this manner: (1) First, he attacked the papal claims to authority in secular matters and in other ways. (2) Then, he fell on the clergy, maintaining that they were unfit as ministers of Christ. (3) He came to attack the Roman dogma of transubstantiation.[5] (4) Finally, after the papal schism, he went so far as to declare that the papacy was the Anti-Christ. This whole doctrinal development was influenced, strengthened and spurred on by his concern with Scriptural authority.

We might conclude this particular discussion by a summary of his theological views. (1) His basic avowal was that the Scriptures, "Godd is Lawe", are the only law of the Church. (2) He maintained that the Church itself is not centered in the Pope and Cardinals, but it is the whole company of the elect. Its only certain head is Christ. (3) Because he was a realist, he reacted against transubstantiation. His own view of Christ's presence seems to have been essentially that later known as consubstantiation. (4) He maintained a very rigorous predestinarianism, amounting almost to fatalism.[6] With these developments in mind we can best proceed to discuss Wyclif's views as to preaching and his own personal practise of the art of preaching.

The basic fact that we must always have before us as we consider Wyclif's views on preaching is that, to him, "the preaching of God's word is a more sacred function than the celebration of the Eucharist"[7], "the most important duty of the clergy".[8] He defines preaching as something which should be "apt, apparent, full of true feeling, fearless in rebuking sins, and so addrest to the heart as to enlighten the spirit and subdue the will".[9] His criticism of the preachers of his day was three-fold: (1) they did not preach Christ; (2) they were too detailed, minute and guilty of hair-splitting distinctions---a carry-over from Scholasticism; and (3) they were guilty of "rhetoricism"---swelling words and poetic ornament. He further maintains that

> lack of preaching based upon the Word alone, was the cause of the spiritual deadness of the age; it was as if one were to prepare a meal without bread. God's word, especially the Gospels, is the seed which brings regeneration and spiritual life. The Church of Christ grew mightily when the Gospel was preached by the Apostles, whereas now the church is decreasing for the want of this spiritual seed, for men preach not to sow Christ's word, but to show their cleverness. If the prophets prefaced their prophecies with 'Thus saith the Lord', and if apostles proclaimed the word of the Lord, so must we too preach God's word and proclaim the Gospel. 10

It was undoubtedly due to the conditions of the day that Wyclif organized his "poor priests" in 1378. They were not an ecclesiastical order (Wyclif already had a poor enough opinion of such decayed orders) but were simply traveling evangelists and Bible colporters of a more Scriptural type who went about the country preaching a simple gospel, teaching, and perhaps distributing copies of the Scriptures and Wyclif's writings written in the native language.[11] Their purpose was to "denounce abuses, proclaim the true doctrine of the Eucharist, and teach the right thinking from which---right living would follow."[12] Most of

Wyclif's works and sermons were written, primarily, for these "poor priests". Through them Wyclif's influence was wide ned and his popularity grew.

We turn now to a discussion of Wyclif's theory as to how preaching ought to be done. This theory was permeated by his insistence on serious exposition of the Bible, which, of course, was a great departure from the practice of the Friars and other popular preachers of his day.[13] Workman[14] points out that Wyclif's theory of preaching can be summarized by stating his five rules for preaching. They are: (1) Utter the truth aptly and adapt to the comprehension of hearers. (2) Preach toward the result of soul-salvation and devotion. (3) All obtruse questions, by-paths of exegesis and 'doubts of schools should be put aside. (4) A genuine, devout feeling in the preacher is essential in order that he may address himself to the hearer's heart. (5) Every preacher ought to preach in the mother tongue. These principles or rules show that Wyclif knew what preaching was and how it should be accomplished.

However, when we turn to Wyclif as a preacher we are disappointed. He fell woefully short of his own high standards of preaching. He, himself, was guilty of sophistry and argument, hair-splitting and doctrinal formula; he is more interested in teaching than proclamation. He reacted against the exempla-type preaching to such an extent that he never uses this type of illustrative material at all. He often turns the pulpit into a platform of castigation of prelates and friars. Only now and then does his sermons have real evangelical appeal. However, Wyclif could at times escape controversy and give passages in his sermons with great passion and evangelical fervor. As a good example we select the following in English:

> Lift up, wretches, the eyes of your souls and behold Him that no spot of sin was in, what pain He suffered for sin of man. He sweat water and blood to wash thee of sin; He was bound and beaten with scourges, the blood running adown by his sides, that thou shouldest keep thy body clean in his service; He was crowned with sharp thorns that thou shouldest think on Him and flee all cursed malice; He was nailed to the cross with sharp nails through hands and feet and stung to the heart with a sharp spear that all thy five wits should be ruled after Him, having mind on the five precious wounds that He suffered for man. [15]

But Wyclif rarely becomes so evangelically passionate, as he hardly ever descended from his professorial chair, and hence, the masses were never won over by his sermons. But even though his sermons were not greatly appealling to the common man, still Wyclif was a great preacher, if preaching is measured by results. His sermons against the prelates and friars were vigorous, bold, and fearless in their assault. They not only infuriated the clergy but they also helped to correct many of their errors. They were clever in appeal and were probably delivered in an eloquent manner. Whatever shortcomings Wyclif may have had, we must admit that his preaching and teaching was productive of good and that his sermons are in the main a great deal better than the sermons of the day. Dargan's summary expresses our appreciation of his sermons in a fine way:

> The sermons are based on Scripture, are not wholly free from scholasticism, nor from the current allegorical method of interpretation, nor from Roman Catholic errors; but they are in the right direction, for they show at least a better interpretation and use of Scripture than was common, and a far more evangelical doctrine. [16]

When we come to consider the Contemporary value of John Wyclif's preaching, we are immediately attracted to two emphases---the primacy of the Scriptures, "Goddis Lawe", and the opposition to ecclesiastical corruption.

It seems that there is almost always a danger of ecclesiasticism lurking in the distance. This apparently is true of all religious denominations and the danger becomes a reality when we grow lax toward keeping our people informed and instructed concerning their glorious heritage as "priests of God", having no need for an extensive hierarchical system of religion. It is just because Wyclif spoke out clearly here that he becomes contemporarily relevant. Certainly we would not want to emulate his method of castigation, but we would want to be just as determined to stand against ecclesiastical encroachment and domination as he. The most deadly thing about super-ecclesiasticism is that it soon kills the Spirit within a religious body and the result is that of which Paul speaks in his letter to Timothy: "Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof".

The other contemporary significance that is quite apparent in Wyclif is his all-consuming emphasis upon the primacy of the Scriptures. Even the title which Wyclif gave to the Scriptures, "God's Law", is significant.[17] To Wyclif this indicated that God was sovereign and every man must be obedient to his Law as revealed in the Scriptures. It was this firm conviction that caused him to speak out against those priests who forsook the preaching of God's Law and it was this same conviction that instigated his prodigous labors in behalf of translation of the Vulgate into the English vernacular. This same firm conviction can and must be eternally relevant. Every generation has recognized that, left to himself, man can but produce disorder and chaos. They have also come to realize---although sometimes too late to do much good---that God's Law is the only possible solution to this chaotic riddle of disorder. It seems that this was what the World Council of Churches was trying to get at in their theme back in 1948. "Man's Disorder and God's Design" pointed to the fact that reliance must ever be upon the omnipotent Creator and Designer of the universe. His Law must be obeyed; his word must be kept; his majesty must be extolled. The decided shift in thought to a more Biblical-based Theology is another indication that Wyclif's emphasis is relevant. It is apparent that those who kept this emphasis in mind, whether knowingly or unknowingly, were the least embarassed and red-faced when this trend appeared. taking all of these facts into consideration, we can readily see that Wyclif's emphasis of the primacy of the Scriptures does have contemporary homiletical value. Strong Biblical preaching is much to be desired in this day of anarcy, God-defiance, and moral laxity. "Is there a clear word from the Lord?" Wyclif said Yes! What kind of sound will be trumpeted forth from the lips of the preachers of this generation? May God help us to make it "no uncertain sound"!

NOTES

1. A. H. Newman: A Manual of Church History (Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1933), Volume I, p. 604

2. Two outstanding men who greatly influenced Wyclif are Robert Grosseteste, the outstanding reforming Bishop of Lincoln, and Richard Fitz Ralph to whom Wyclif was certainly indebted for his views on lordship and property.

3. In this historical sketch we follow the article in the Encyclopedia Britannica, Volume 28, pp. 866-871

4. The name Lollard was applied to those of reform tendencies. It evidently is a word of reproach, signifying babblers or praters. Poole says: "A Wycliffite or Lollard comes to indicate one who opposes the hierarchical organisation and the temporal endowments of the Church, together with a number of specific doctrines among which that of transubstantiation is the most prominent; who maintains the duty of public preaching as paramount among the obligations of the Christian minister, and the duty of reading the Bible as necessary alike for the layman and the clergyman".
Wycliffe and Movements For Reform (New York: A.D.F. Randolph Co., 1888), pp. 113, 114

   Cf. Also E.C. Dargan: A History of Preaching, Volume I, p. 341

5. Cf. Workman: John Wyclif (London: Oxford University Press, 1926) Vol. II; p. 30ff for a full discussion of this issue.
Walker tells us that "Philosophically he (Wyclif) was a realist, in contrast to the prevailing nominalism of his age. He was deeply influenced by Augustine, and through Augustine by Platonic conceptions". (A History of The Christian Church, p. 298) This, to a great extent, determined his reaction to transubtantiation.

6. Newman: op. cit., Volume I, pp. 606, 607

7. R.C. Petry: "Emphasis on the Gospel and Christian Reform in Late Medieval Preaching", Church History, Volume XVI, No. 2 (June, 1947), p. 84

8. Workman: op. cit., Vol. II, p. 206

9. Granvelle Kleiser (ed.): The World's Great sermons, Volume I (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1908), p. 74

10. Workman op. cit., Vol. II, p. 211

11. Dargan: op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 337, 338

   These poor priests, whom Vaughan calls "Free-spoken and popular Methodists of the fourteenth century", traveled from town to town, village to village appealing to the common heart and hope of England. Their preaching was not in vain, for through them was England prepared for that reform which was later to come and produce in England a Bible-loving populance.
   cf. T.H. Pattison: A History of Christian Preaching, p. 117

12. Workman: op. cit., Vol. II, p. 201

13. Miss Deanesly (Lollard Bible) has investigated impartially the question What part did the Bible play in the religious life of the people? She had found that the average parish priest was poorly educated, hardly even able to read Latin, let alone translate it.
   This being true, the standards of the itinerant and lower clergy would be even lower. We can well conclude that Wyclif's insistence was revolutionary.
   Cf. Workman: Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 153-155

14. Workman: Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 212

15. T.A. Arnold: Select English Works of John Wyclif, Volume III, p. 107 quoted by Workman: Ibid., Vol. II, p. 213

16. Dargan: op. cit., Vol. I p. 339

17. cf. Workman: Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 153

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arnold, Thomas (ed.): Wyclif's Select English Works, 3 vols. Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1869-1870.

Catholic Encyclopedia: New York, The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., 1912. Volume 15, Article, "Wyclif".

Dargan, Edwin Charles: A History of Preaching New York, George H. Doran Company, 1905. Volume I From the Apostolic Fathers to the Great Reformers.

Gairdner, James: Lollardy and the Reformation in England; London, Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1908. Volume I

Encyclopedia Brittanica, Eleventh Edition; New York, The Encyclopedia Britanica Company, 1911. Vol. 28, "Wyclif"

Kleiser, Grenville: The Worlds Great Sermons: I --Basil to Calvin; New York, Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1908.

Latourette, Kenneth Scott: A History of Christianity; New York, Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1953.

Newman, A.H.: A Manual of Church History, Revised and Enlarged Edition; Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1933. Vol.I.

Ollard, S.O.: Dictionary of English Church History; London, A.R. Mowbray and Co., 1919. Article Wyclif.

Pattison, T.H.: The History of Christian preaching; Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, 1903.

Petry, Ray C.: No Uncertain Sound, Sermons that Shaped the Pulpit Tradition; Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1948.

"Emphasis On The Gospel and Christian Reform in Late Medieval Preaching" in Church History, Volume XVI, No. 2 (June, 1947).

Poole R.L.: Wycliffe and Movements For Reform; New York, A.D.F. Randolph Company, 1888.

Walker, Williston: A History of the Christian Church; New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.

Workman, Herbert B.: John Wyclif, A Study of the English Medieval Church; Londan, Oxford University Press, 1926. Vol. II.